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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2678
INFO RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEAWJA/USDOJ WASHDC PRIORITY
RULSDMK/USDOT WASHDC PRIORITY
RUCPDOC/USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC//J5//
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI
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RHMFIUU/USFJ //J5/J021//
RUYNAAAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA
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SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 04/30/09

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- (1) Sankei-FNN poll on Aso cabinet, political parties

SANKEI (Page 4) (Abridged)
April 28, 2009

Questions & Answers

(Note) Figures shown in percentage. Figures in parentheses denote findings from a previous Sankei-FNN survey conducted March 28-29.

Q: Do you support the Aso cabinet?

Yes 28.2 (20.8)
No 59.2 (66.3)
Don't know (D/K) 12.6 (12.9)

Q: Which political party do you support?

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) 29.2 (27.5)
Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto) 21.5 (22.2)
New Komeito (NK) 3.0 (4.1)
Japanese Communist Party (JCP) 2.9 (4.0)
Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto) 1.3 (1.3)

People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto) 0.5 (0.2)
Reform Club (RC or Kaikaku Kurabu) 0.1 (0.0)
New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon) 0.1 (0.4)
Other political parties 1.2 (1.3)
None 39.6 (37.8)
D/K 0.6 (1.2)

Q: Do you appreciate Prime Minister Aso and his cabinet on the following points?

Prime Minister Aso's personal character

Yes 37.7 (32.4)
No 55.5 (60.1)
D/K 6.8 (7.5)

Prime Minister Aso's leadership

Yes 16.6 (11.8)
No 78.4 (62.5)
D/K 5.0 (5.7)

Economic policy

Yes 27.6 (24.3)
No 65.8 (66.6)
D/K 6.6 (9.1)

Foreign policy

Yes 33.4 (25.8)
No 52.7 (57.5)
D/K 13.9 (16.7)

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Cash benefit payout

Yes 39.2 (37.3)
No 55.7 (58.1)
D/K 5.1 (4.6)

Expressway toll reduction

Yes 58.0 (58.9)
No 37.7 (34.8)
D/K 4.3 (6.3)

Public relations on North Korea's missile launch

Yes 33.0 (---)
No 53.7 (---)
D/K 13.3 (---)

Sanctions against North Korea, policy toward the United Nations after North Korea's missile launch

Yes 36.5 (---)
No 49.0 (---)
D/K 14.5 (---)

Q: What do you want the Aso cabinet to pursue first?

Global warming 3.2
Social security, including healthcare and pension systems 32.4
North Korea problem 2.8
Northern territories 1.0
Tax reform, including consumption tax 4.7
Government waste 26.6
Economic stimulus 22.2
Political reform 2.0
D/K 3.4

Q: When comparing Prime Minister Aso and DPJ President Ozawa, who do you think is trustworthier?

Prime Minister Aso 47.3 (41.0)
DPJ President Ozawa 28.1 (28.5)
D/K 24.6 (30.5)

Q: When comparing Prime Minister Aso and DPJ President Ozawa, who do you think is better in terms of policies?

Prime Minister Aso 38.3 (30.5)

DPJ President Ozawa 37.8 (39.8)
D/K 23.9 (29.7)

Q: When comparing Prime Minister Aso and DPJ President Ozawa, who do you think is more appealing in election campaigning?

Prime Minister Aso 40.7 (35.8)
DPJ President Ozawa 29.3 (31.6)
D/K 30.0 (32.6)

Q: When comparing Prime Minister Aso and DPJ President Ozawa, who do you think is more appropriate for prime minister?

Prime Minister Aso 39.7 (29.5)
DPJ President Ozawa 26.2 (30.2)
D/K 34.1 (40.3)

Q: Do you think it is necessary to carry out the political reforms

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listed below and now being discussed between the ruling and opposition parties?

Reduce Dietmembers
Yes 85.8
No 11.0
D/K 3.2

Set age limit for public office
Yes 78.5
No 16.7
D/K 4.8

Restrict hereditary politics
Yes 51.9
No 41.5
D/K 6.6

Prohibit corporate, organizational donations
Yes 68.5
No 25.4
D/K 6.1

Q: DPJ President Ozawa's secretary has been indicted on the charge of violating the Political Funds Control Law. Do you think DPJ President Ozawa's account was convincing?

Yes 14.3 (16.8)
No 80.9 (78.8)
D/K 4.8 (4.4)

Q: Do you think DPJ President Ozawa should resign as his party's head?

Yes 56.6 (62.3)
No 37.4 (30.8)
D/K 6.0 (6.9)

Q: Do you think DPJ President Ozawa should fulfill his public accountability?

Yes 80.5 (---)
No 15.6 (---)
D/K 3.9 (---)

Q: Do you think DPJ President Ozawa should hold a one-on-one debate with Prime Minister Aso at an early date?

Yes 84.1 (---)
No 11.5 (---)
D/K 4.4 (---)

Q: Do you think the following bills should be passed during the current Diet session?

Additional economic stimulus

Yes 79.9 (---)
No 12.8 (---)
D/K 7.3 (---)

Consumer Affairs Agency establishment
Yes 55.3 (---)

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No 28.2 (---)
D/K 16.5 (---)

Antipiracy legislation
Yes 60.6 (---)
No 29.8 (---)
D/K 9.6 (---)

Q: Who do you think is most appropriate now for Japan's prime minister among the following politicians in the ruling and opposition parties?

Taro Aso 8.7 (4.6)
Shigeru Ishiba 2.9 (3.9)
Nobuteru Ishihara 5.4 (6.2)
Yuriko Koike 3.7 (4.0)
Junichiro Koizumi 11.7 (11.1)
Yoichi Masuzoe 10.6 (10.4)
Kaoru Yosano 5.3 (5.7)
Other ruling party lawmakers 3.5 (2.3)
Yoshimi Watanabe 4.0 (4.5)
Ichiro Ozawa 5.2 (5.8)
Katsuya Okada 5.4 (6.5)
Naoto Kan 2.8 (4.2)
Yukio Hatoyama 2.2 (2.5)
Seiji Maehara 2.3 (---)
Other opposition party lawmakers 2.9 (3.5)
None 20.1 (18.1)
D/K 3.3 (5.1)

Q: What do you think about replacing Prime Minister Aso before the next election for the House of Representatives?

Step down, election under the new prime minister 23.5
Elect the prime minister, according to the election results 72.5
D/K 4.0

Q: What do you think about replacing DPJ President Ozawa before the next election for the House of Representatives?

Step down, election under the new DPJ president 57.3
Election under DPJ President Ozawa 39.8
D/K 2.9

Q: Which political party would you like to vote for in the next election for the House of Representatives in your proportional representation bloc?

LDP 34.6 (34.7)
DPJ 34.0 (36.0)
NK 3.9 (5.9)
JCP 4.5 (4.9)
SDP 2.0 (2.2)
PNP 0.6 (0.6)
RC 0.0 (0.0)
NPN 0.4 (0.6)
Other political parties 10.3 (6.0)
D/K 9.7 (8.7)

Q: What government would you like to see after the next House of Representatives election?

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LDP-led government 21.0
DPJ-led government 30.1

Polling methodology: The survey was conducted April 25-26 by the Sankei Shimbun and Fuji News Network (FNN) over the telephone on a computer-aided random digit dialing (RDD) basis. For the survey, a total of 1,000 persons were sampled from among men and women, aged 20 and over, across the nation.

(2) Think of statesmen making laws: Seiji Maehara and Guam relocation agreement

NIKKEI (Page 2) (Full)
April 28, 2009

Seiji Maehara, a vice president of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), 46, had lunch with Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Mitchell (Shivers) on April 16 at a Spanish restaurant near the Department of Defense in Washington. Mitchell then asked Maehara about his party's policy toward the U.S. The DPJ had opposed the agreement on the relocation of U.S. Marines from Okinawa to Guam. Maehara said:

"We will cooperate on the U.S. force realignment in Japan, but our party will discuss individual issues while maintaining the relationship of trust."

Maehara told Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg and other U.S. officials: "Japan-U.S. relations are the linchpin of Japanese diplomacy." Maehara, who is regarded as a right-wing politician of the party, was quick to oppose the Guam relocation agreement, which stipulates Japan's share of up to 2.8 billion dollars.

Maehara happened to find the book titled International Politics written by then Kyoto University Prof. Masataka Kosaka, while he was preparing for an entrance examination, after having failed in an exam the previous year. The book paved the way for him to foreign and security affairs. He entered Kyoto University without hesitation. He studied under Prof. Kosaka, a conservative opinion leader, who made the basis for the reevaluation of former Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida. He once thought of becoming a scholar. However, he was told by Kosaka that he was not smart enough to become a scholar. He, therefore, joined the Matsushita Institute of Government and Management.

He was first elected to the Diet in 1993 as a member of the Japan New Party. In opposition to the political move involving the JNP, which was led by then Japan Renewal Party head Ichiro Ozawa, he moved to the New Party Sakigake.

At that time, Hiroyuki Sonoda, 67, extended a helping hand to Maehara. For Maehara, Sonoda is still the most reliable person among the ruling Liberal Democratic Party members. They sometimes come across at their favorite restaurant in the Ginza district. Sonoda said: "I want to work with you again." Maehara responded with a smile: "I would like to do so."

Maehara won the 2005 DPJ presidential election. Before that, through Kazuo Inamori, honorary chairman of KYOCERA Co., Ozawa had offered to support Maehara in the race if Maehara would give Ozawa the post

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of secretary general. But Maehara flatly turned down Ozawa's offer. Since then, it is said that there has been a wide gulf between the two.

Ozawa, Maehara's successor, took a stance against the government and ruling camp and his stance had a negative impact on the Maritime Self-Defense Force's refueling mission in the Indian Ocean and other issues. In the DPJ, there are moves to resolve issues by "opposing the principle," in order to avoid the confrontation between the right and left wings. However, the party will face issues it has put off if it takes the reins of government.

Political realignment advocates in the LDP, which has become perplexed at the politically divided Diet situation, name Maehara

with whom they want to form a new party. Some DPJ members say Maehara can read neither the political situation nor a mood in the party.

Maehara has recently reiterated the need for "a change in government," refraining from making remarks on Ozawa's course of action (over his secretary's violation of the Political Funds Control Law). He did not give his word to former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and other politicians, with whom he visited the United States.

He says: "A change of government is just a means. We will have to find out what the purpose is." If he joins the ruling camp, he may have to prepare a different answer.

ZUMWALT